

enables these groups to document abuses by the regime and to keep the hope of democracy alive in an increasingly authoritarian country.

Venezuela is one of the most dangerous places in Latin America and the Caribbean to be a human rights defender. The Maduro regime is currently being investigated for crimes against humanity by the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Organization of American States has similarly denounced the regime's abuses. These men and women on the ground in Venezuela put their lives on the line to expose the regime's failings, and they need our support.

On the media front, the regime has arrested and abused journalists, both Venezuelan journalists and foreign journalists, operating in the country, including a prominent American journalist. Harassment from the government has led most independent radio, TV, and print outlets to close. Social media has, at times, been blocked, including during the recent uprisings against Maduro. USAID programs are critical to overcome government censorship and propaganda.

On the democracy front, Maduro was reelected in May of 2018 in a snap election that failed to meet minimum international standards and was widely condemned as illegitimate. The sooner that civil society and international actors can weigh in on how to improve the National Electoral Council and reform the electoral system more broadly, the sooner free and fair Presidential elections can be held.

This is the goal of the Guaido government. It is also the goal of the Lima Group which is composed of Latin American countries and Canada and which is seeking a just solution to the crisis in Venezuela. It is a goal that merits continued American support.

I am proud that my colleagues voted for this amendment. It is a vote for the people of Venezuela who have suffered so much under this terrible regime.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PATRICIA FINDER-STONE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GALLAGHER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a remarkable woman and a remarkable Wisconsinite, Patricia Finder-Stone. She was simply incredible: a wife, a mother, a grandmother, an educator, a veteran, and a community activist. Her life serves as an example of what it really means to be passionately involved in a community and committed to giving back.

During the Korean war, she left her nursing job in Chicago to serve her country in the Air Force where she proudly served at the Northeast Air Command in Greenland, and upon leaving the military, she married her husband, Mark, and raised their four children in northeast Wisconsin.

Pat then returned to school and received her bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin Green Bay and her master's from UW-Madison, graduating both times with honors.

She practiced nursing throughout her life and spread her passion for nursing to others by teaching at schools around Wisconsin including Bellin College of Nursing and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. She was well known and incredibly involved in the healthcare community and was a proud recipient of both the American Cancer Society's St. George National Award and the NWTC Teacher of the Year Award.

Beyond her nursing career, Pat was an active community volunteer, sharing her time and talents to serve on the boards of multiple health advocacy groups in northeast Wisconsin.

She worked with both Democrat and Republican leadership in Wisconsin on a number of health policy issues, including educating the public on the negative effects of tobacco and improving care for the aging population.

She served as the president of the League of Women Voters of Greater Green Bay and sat on the state board of the League of Women Voters.

Pat's extraordinary life of service to her family, community, and country reminds us all of the importance of community engagement and civic responsibility. Pat's passing will be mourned for many across northeast Wisconsin, and her impact on our community will not soon be forgotten. But my hope is her life stands as a reminder of how important it is to be involved and how lucky we all are to be Americans.

There are a lot of people when you are a Member of Congress who come into your office. Some are angry with you, some are happy with you, but some really find a way past the political moment and find a way to touch your heart, and Pat was one of those people. My prayers and condolences go out to her family and to all the lives she has touched.

RECOGNIZING GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Gun Violence Awareness Month and call upon the Senate to protect the lives of innocent Americans by passing commonsense gun reform measures that have already passed the House.

This past February, in my district in Aurora, Illinois, five innocent people were killed and six police officers injured when a person who shouldn't legally have had a gun opened fire in a workplace, trying to kill as many people as he could. And earlier this month, we witnessed another horrific shooting in Virginia Beach where 12 more innocent lives were taken.

These tragedies have become too common in America. The victims are

our family members, our friends, and our neighbors.

The House has already passed legislation that would, in fact, cure a fraction of this epidemic of gun violence, but the Senate refuses to act.

Commonsense gun reform is supported by an overwhelming majority of Americans, and Congress has a responsibility to protect innocent lives. Every American deserves the right to live their lives free from the fear of violence and without worry that their next trip to work, to school, or their place of worship may be their last.

Thoughts and prayers are not enough. We cannot wait for the next tragedy. The Senate must act now.

FUNDING FOR WAR AND THE WAR POWERS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we spent many hours in this Chamber talking about the amendments to the appropriations bill, this combination of several appropriations bills, that we will pass later this week.

What I would like to take a minute to talk about is an amendment I didn't offer because we got the material in the base text.

Our Constitution creates a tension between Article I and Article II when it comes to the power to wage war: the Commander in Chief on the one hand versus the authority of Congress to declare war on the other.

Thomas Jefferson determined that it was necessary to get the approval of Congress before he deployed Marines to the shores of Tripoli, our first non-declared war, our first intervention in the Middle East, and a precedent that should have been followed by subsequent Presidents.

But in fact, since the days of Jefferson, on many occasions, Presidents just sent our troops in without seeking authority from Congress. That is why in 1973, in the wake of the Vietnam war, this Congress passed the War Powers Act, also known as the War Powers Resolution. It provides that the President cannot deploy for more than 60 or 90 days without an authorization to use military force.

Now, that act of 1973 is not everything it should be because it did not encompass the idea of bombing without deploying troops for periods of 60 or 90 days. It is unclear, perhaps. It is in need of revision, perhaps, but it is the only legal restraint on a President committing us to war without any approval from this Congress.

But every Attorney General since the 1970s has advised Presidents that the War Powers Act isn't actually binding on them, that a President can send unlimited troops into battle for an unlimited period for any purpose. This is not what should be, and yet many constitutional scholars agree with these provisions, with this interpretation. That is